

(19)



(11)

EP 2 684 768 B1

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT SPECIFICATION

(45) Date of publication and mention
of the grant of the patent:
13.03.2019 Bulletin 2019/11

(51) Int Cl.:
B62B 9/12 (2006.01) B62B 9/14 (2006.01)

(21) Application number: **12176350.2**

(22) Date of filing: **13.07.2012**

(54) **A passenger carrier with an accessory cross bar**

Passagierträger mit zusätzlicher Querstange

Support de passager avec barre transversale d'accessoire

(84) Designated Contracting States:
**AL AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB
GR HR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC MK MT NL NO
PL PT RO RS SE SI SK SM TR**

(43) Date of publication of application:
15.01.2014 Bulletin 2014/03

(73) Proprietor: **Thule Child Transport Systems Ltd
Calgary, AB T2H 1Z9 (CA)**

(72) Inventors:
• **Fleming, Wesley Justin
T2Z 2W7 Calgary, Alberta (CA)**

• **Britton, Daniel W.
T3H 0S5 Calgary, Alberta (CA)**
• **Singh, Paramjit
T3J 5I5 Calgary, Alberta (CA)**

(74) Representative: **Valea AB
Box 1098
405 23 Göteborg (SE)**

(56) References cited:
**EP-A2- 0 913 312 EP-A2- 2 017 158
DE-A1- 19 832 259 DE-U1- 20 000 627
NL-C1- 1 001 615 US-B1- 6 368 006
US-S1- D 633 825**

EP 2 684 768 B1

Note: Within nine months of the publication of the mention of the grant of the European patent in the European Patent Bulletin, any person may give notice to the European Patent Office of opposition to that patent, in accordance with the Implementing Regulations. Notice of opposition shall not be deemed to have been filed until the opposition fee has been paid. (Art. 99(1) European Patent Convention).

Description

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The invention relates to a passenger carrier and in particular to a multi-function passenger carrier comprising a frame with a coupling arrangement for coupling of the trailer to a bicycle at a front end of the passenger carrier and a push-handle at a rear end of the passenger carrier.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Passenger carriers, in particular child carriers that are equipped to be used both as bicycle trailers and as manually pushed infant strollers for use by a walking or jogging person are disclosed in US 5,344,171, US D633,825 S, US 2008/0143076 A1 and US 2010/0244405 A1. When decoupled from a bicycle, the trailer can be converted into a push-type carrier provided with a generally horizontally arranged push-handle to allow the trailer to be pushed by a walking person in a manner corresponding to that of a conventional baby carrier or stroller.

[0003] Particular demands are put on a combined stroller-trailer as it needs to be light-weight while still having a strong and durable frame in order to withstand being pulled after a bicycle over a rough surface at speeds that may be considerably higher than the speeds that are attained with conventional baby carriages and strollers which are designed for walking and running speeds. It is further generally desirable that the multi-function passenger carriers are foldable in order to occupy as little space as possible during storage or when being transported, e. g. in a car.

[0004] Moreover, the previously known multi-function passenger carriers are optimized with regard to the trailer function, implying that they lack such accessory equipment which would be desirable in a stroller but which is not needed in a bicycle trailer. Such accessory equipment may include infant seats and bassinets, etc. which are not used when the carrier is pulled after a bicycle. A stroller having a stroller tray mounted horizontally beneath a handle bar is disclosed in US 6,368,006 and EP 0 913 312 A2 discloses a stroller having a frame comprising a horizontally arranged tube for housing a rolled-up protective covering. Both documents can be seen as representing the closest prior art to the subject-matter of claim 1.

[0005] EP 2 017 158 A2 relates to a stroller and an elongated connecting device which can be applied as an intermediate piece between two separate handles on the stroller in order to create a continuous handle bar. The connecting device is made from an outer tubular cover element having three internal elements inserted into and filling the tubular cover. Accordingly, an object of the invention is to provide a means for improving the function of a passenger carrier bicycle trailer, and in particular to

improve the function of a bicycle trailer that can be used as a stroller.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] In accordance with the invention there is offered a passenger carrier comprising an accessory cross bar in accordance with claim 1. Preferred embodiments are defined in the dependent claims. The passenger carrier comprises a passenger carrier frame and a push-handle at a front end or a rear end of the passenger carrier frame.

[0007] The accessory cross bar constitutes an additional transverse reinforcement member, increasing stability of the passenger carrier frame. The non-circular cross-section of the accessory cross bar enhances torsional resistance in the passenger carrier frame, which may be particularly advantageous in a combined bicycle trailer and stroller being used in the trailer mode. When the passenger carrier is in a stroller mode, the accessory cross bar may be used for attaching accessories such as bags, baskets, and other luggage containers as well as holders and fixtures for cups, bottles, mobile phones, electronic monitoring devices, lights, bells, infant seats and bassinets, etc. When the passenger carrier is in a trailer mode, the accessory cross bar may be used for attaching luggage holders, lights, etc. In the trailer mode, there may be a wish to be able to provide additional luggage capacity for bulky luggage which would normally not be carried along on a stroller. Such luggage may include a tent and other camping equipment.

[0008] The accessory cross bar will generally be mounted in front of and/or below the push-handle at the rear end of the passenger carrier. Common push-handles have a generally horizontally arranged gripping portion that may be straight or curved and that is connected by two generally vertically arranged struts or legs at each side of a passenger carrier passenger compartment. The push-handle may be pivotably connected at the sides of the passenger compartment so that the angle and height of the gripping part may be adjusted. Furthermore, the passenger carrier may have one handle at each side of the passenger compartment or a combination of a loop-shaped push-handle and side handles. The accessory cross bar may preferably be designed to be mounted between the struts or legs, and may be placed at an upper edge or slightly above an upper edge of the passenger compartment and at a distance from the gripping portion of the push-handle.

[0009] The accessory cross bar as disclosed herein is designed for being mounted horizontally in the vicinity of the push-handle at the rear end or front end of the passenger carrier and has an upper part and a lower part in a vertical direction of the accessory cross bar and of the passenger carrier. At least the upper part of the accessory cross bar has a rounded surface. Preferably, a major part of the outer surface of the accessory cross bar is rounded so that the accessory cross bar has no sharp edges or corners that may cause discomfort or even hurt

a person gripping the cross bar such as a walking child or someone attaching the cross bar to the passenger carrier frame. A rounded profile on the accessory cross bar is also beneficial in that it conforms to the aerodynamic design of the passenger carrier frame.

[0010] The accessory cross bar may have an asymmetric shape in a horizontal direction. As used herein, the horizontal direction of the accessory cross bar refers to a direction from the front to the rear of the cross bar as it appears when correctly mounted on a passenger carrier frame. An asymmetric horizontal shape of the accessory cross bar may be advantageous in that it may be used to ascertain that the accessory cross bar is correctly mounted on the passenger carrier frame and/or that any accessories are correctly mounted on the accessory cross bar. This is achieved by adapting any coupling members used for coupling of the accessory cross bar to the passenger carrier frame or an accessory to the accessory cross bar to the shape of the accessory cross bar. Thereby, the specially designed coupling members will engage in a predetermined manner with the asymmetrically shaped accessory cross bar, preventing incorrect mounting of the accessory cross bar and/or of the accessories. To be able to ascertain correct mounting of an accessory on the accessory cross bar is particularly important from a security aspect when attaching heavier accessories such as infant seats, bassinets or luggage containers. A wrongly mounted accessory may adversely affect the stability of the passenger carrier and may even cause the passenger carrier to overturn.

[0011] The accessory cross bar is hollow and comprises an outer wall and an interior cavity. A hollow accessory cross bar having a non-circular cross-section can be made highly resistant to torsional forces while still being light-weight. Suitable materials for the accessory cross bar may be metal, preferably aluminium or titanium, light-weight composite materials or plastic that can be formed into a profiled accessory cross bar by conventional methods. The accessory cross bar has one or more openings extending in a longitudinal direction of the accessory cross bar in the outer wall of the accessory cross bar in order to permit access from the outside to an inner cavity. A longitudinal opening in the wall of the accessory cross bar will appear as a track extending along the cross bar. When a fixture or holder for an accessory is inserted into the inner cavity of the accessory cross bar, a portion of the fixture or holder will protrude out of the longitudinal opening. In the case of the accessory being e.g. a canvas covering for the trailer frame, it will typically be the covering itself that protrudes out of the opening.

[0012] One or more vertical walls, such as one vertical wall or two vertical walls may be arranged in the interior cavity, dividing the interior cavity into sub-cavities. When at least two vertical walls are arranged in the inner cavity, the accessory cross bar may comprise an inner horizontal wall extending between two inner vertical walls in the interior cavity, resulting in the accessory cross bar having an inner H-shaped profile.

[0013] The inner cavity or one or more sub-cavities inside the accessory cross bar may be arranged to receive and retain a fastener element for an accessory. The fastener element may be arranged to be slid into the cavity from an end opening in the accessory cross bar with a portion of the fastener element or the accessory protruding out through an elongated opening in the wall of the accessory cross bar. Alternatively, the fastener element may be snapped into the cavity through an elongated opening in the outer wall of the accessory cross bar.

[0014] Snap-in accessories may include light fixtures, bells, holders for mobile phones, cup holders etc. which may be placed anywhere along the track formed by the elongated opening in the wall of the accessory cross bar. It is also conceivable to use snap-in fixtures for attaching a covering extending the full length of the accessory cross bar.

[0015] Slide-in accessories may include a covering for the passenger carrier frame, wherein an end portion of such a covering may be inserted and retained in the inner cavity. However, also different types of holders and fixtures for other accessories may be attached to the accessory cross bar by means of a slide-in arrangement. The slide-in fastening option is normally more permanent than the snap-in fastener option as affixing and removal of the accessory requires the accessory cross bar to be detached from the passenger carrier frame in order to access a slide-in opening at the end of the accessory cross bar. Accordingly, an accessory cross bar that is formed integral with the passenger carrier frame by the manufacturer of the passenger carrier may have non-removable slide-in accessories fastened to the accessory cross bar by the manufacturer. Such non-removable accessories may be a covering for a passenger compartment, and/or fixtures and holders constituting permanent equipment of the passenger carrier.

[0016] Commonly available passenger carriers such as a dual-function bicycle trailers have a passenger compartment with side walls and a textile or plastic covering sheet material forming a front wall, a roof and a rear wall and optionally also the side walls. The accessory cross bar may comprise two inner sub-cavities each arranged to receive and retain an end portion of a cover sheet for covering of the bicycle trailer frame. Accordingly, a first inner sub-cavity may be arranged to receive and retain an end portion of a covering sheet arranged to form a front and roof wall and optionally also side walls of the passenger compartment and a second inner sub-cavity may be arranged to receive and retain an end portion of a covering sheet arranged to form a rear wall of the passenger compartment.

[0017] The accessory cross bar of the invention may have accessories that are attached on the outside of the accessory cross bar as well as accessories attached by being inserted into an inner cavity in the accessory cross bar either by sliding-in through an end opening in the accessory cross bar or by a snap-in attachment through a longitudinal opening or track in the accessory cross bar.

[0018] The accessory cross bar may be an integral, pre-mounted part of the passenger carrier frame. An integral accessory cross bar provides the manufacturer with a means of deciding the exact positioning of the accessory cross bar on the passenger carrier frame and to ascertain correct and secure mounting of any permanent equipment attached to the accessory cross bar. Furthermore, by making a pre-mounted accessory cross bar with a non-symmetrical cross-section, the manufacturer can ascertain that any user mounted accessories are mounted in a correct way on the accessory cross bar.

[0019] Alternatively, the accessory cross bar may be separate from the passenger carrier frame such that it may be attached to the passenger carrier frame by a user of the passenger carrier. A separate accessory cross bar may comprise attachment members for repeated attachment and removal of the accessory cross bar from the passenger carrier frame. A separate accessory cross bar avails a user with the option of deciding whether to mount an accessory cross bar or not on the passenger carrier. Furthermore, a separate accessory cross bar can be removed from the passenger carrier when not needed, for instance when there is a desire to minimize the weight of the passenger carrier. A separate accessory cross bar may be conveniently stored by a user optionally together with any accessories affixed thereto during periods when it is not needed and can subsequently be attached to the passenger carrier frame together with the accessories when desired. A passenger carrier without the accessory cross bar being mounted thereon is not part of the invention.

[0020] A separate accessory cross bar may be provided with means for length adjustment so that it may be adapted to fit differently sized passenger carrier. Such length adjustment means may be accomplished e.g. by providing the accessory cross bar with telescopically movable portions or by arranging an adjustment screw or similar at one or both ends of the accessory cross bar. Length adjustment means may be provided in the attachment members used for attaching the accessory cross bar to the passenger carrier frame. In order to increase stability of the accessory cross bar and to prevent unintentional length changes, the length adjustment means preferably includes locking means for ascertaining that the accessory cross bar retains a selected length when the accessory cross bar is mounted on a passenger carrier frame.

[0021] The passenger carrier may be a multi-function bicycle trailer and stroller.

DEFINITIONS

[0022] As used herein, the terms "trailer", "bicycle trailer", "stroller", "passenger carrier" and "carrier" are used to refer to vehicles that can be connected to a bicycle in order to be pulled after the bicycle or vehicles that can be used on its own as hand-pushed carrier. The term "multi-function passenger carrier" refers to a vehicle that

can be used either as a bicycle trailer or as a stroller.

[0023] By a horizontal direction as used herein is implied a direction in a horizontal plane of a passenger carrier when in an in-use-position, i.e. while being pulled after a bicycle or being pushed by a person. A horizontal direction of an accessory cross bar is a direction coinciding with a horizontal direction of a passenger carrier.

[0024] By a vertical direction as used herein is implied a direction in a vertical plane through a passenger carrier when in an in-use-position, i.e. while being pulled after a bicycle or being pushed by a person. A vertical direction of an accessory cross bar is a direction coinciding with a vertical direction of a passenger carrier.

[0025] By a front part of a passenger carrier as used herein is implied a part that is intended to be facing towards a bicycle when the passenger carrier is coupled to a bicycle or to be facing away from a pusher of the passenger carrier when it is used as a stroller. In analogy therewith, a front part of a passenger carrier frame or of an accessory cross bar is a part intended to be facing towards a bicycle or away from a person pushing the passenger carrier.

[0026] A back or rear part of a passenger carrier, passenger carrier frame or accessory cross bar is a part opposite to the front part and intended to be facing away from a bicycle or towards a person depending on how the passenger carrier is being used.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0027] The invention will be described in greater detail with reference to the appended drawings in which:

- Figure 1 shows a perspective view of a multi-function passenger carrier in a stroller mode with an accessory cross bar permanently attached to the passenger carrier frame;
- Figure 2 shows a detail view of the multi-function passenger carrier in Fig. 1 in the area of the accessory cross bar without any accessories mounted on the accessory cross bar;
- Figure 3 shows a detail view of the multi-function passenger carrier in Fig. 1 in the area of the accessory cross bar and with accessories mounted on the accessory cross bar;
- Figure 4 shows a perspective view of an accessory cross bar profile;
- Figure 5 shows an end view of the accessory cross bar profile in Fig. 4;
- Figure 6 shows a side detail view of an accessory cross bar attached at one end to a multi-function passenger carrier frame;

- Figure 7 shows an end view of an accessory cross bar with two cover material sheets mounted on the accessory cross bar;
- Figure 8 shows a perspective view of the accessory cross bar in Fig. 7;
- Figure 9 shows a detail of the passenger carrier frame in Fig. 1 in the area of the accessory cross bar with a cover attached to the accessory cross bar;
- Figure 10 shows a perspective view of a multi-function passenger carrier frame with an accessory cross bar removably attached to the passenger carrier frame; and
- Figure 11 shows a detail of the multi-function passenger carrier frame in Fig. 1 in the area of the accessory cross bar without any accessories mounted on the accessory cross bar.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0028] Although the description refers to a passenger carrier in the form of a multi-function passenger carrier, it is to be understood that the accessory bar of the invention may be used with any kind of passenger carrier that can be used as a stroller.

[0029] The multi-function passenger carrier 1 in Fig. 1 is shown without any covering, revealing the structure of the carrier frame 2. The passenger carrier 1 can be used in a trailer mode, coupled to the rear end of a bicycle and in a stroller mode allowing it to be pushed by a walking or running person. The passenger carrier 1 in Fig. 1 is shown in the stroller mode, i.e. without any connection to a bicycle. Apart from the carrier frame 2 and the covering that is absent in Fig. 1, the passenger carrier 1 comprises two rear wheels 3 mounted on a horizontal rear axis 4 and a front wheel 5 pivotably mounted at the front of the passenger carrier 1. When the passenger carrier 1 is in the trailer mode, it is coupled to the rear end of a bicycle by means of a coupling device 6 arranged at the front end of the passenger carrier 1.

[0030] The passenger carrier 1 shown in Fig. 1 can be folded into a compact transport and storage configuration by folding the carrier frame 2 at lockable joints 7. Foldability is generally a desired feature of a passenger carrier but is not an essential feature of the passenger carrier 1 according to the invention.

[0031] The carrier frame 2 further comprises a push-handle 8 at the rear end of the carrier frame 2. The push-handle 8 is shown with a generally horizontally arranged central gripping portion 9 and curved side gripping portions 10 at each end of the central gripping portion 9 allowing the handle to be gripped with the hands either on the straight central gripping portion 9 or at the curved end portions 10. The push-handle 8 is shown to form an

arch-like connection between two generally vertically arranged struts 11 at each side of a passenger compartment 12 defined inside the carrier frame 2. An accessory cross bar 15 is shown to be mounted between the struts 11, and to be placed at an upper edge 16 of the passenger compartment 12 at a distance from the horizontal central gripping portion 9 of the push-handle 8.

[0032] The specific shape and construction of the push-handle 8 that is shown in Fig. 1 should not be considered limiting to the invention, as many other shapes may be envisaged by a person skilled in the art. Accordingly, an accessory cross bar 15 as disclosed herein may be used with any design of push-handle or push-handles as known in the art. Furthermore, it is to be understood that the shape and construction of the carrier frame 2 may be different from that shown in Fig. 1. For instance, the shape of the passenger compartment may differ, the passenger carrier may have two front wheels, etc.

[0033] The accessory cross bar 15 is shown to be permanently mounted on the carrier frame 2 by means of end fixtures 17 such that the accessory cross bar 15 is an integral component of the carrier frame 2.

[0034] Furthermore, the passenger carrier 1 in Fig. 1 is shown with two accessories 18, 19 attached to the accessory cross bar 15 by means of clamping members 20 which grip the accessory cross bar 15 from above and hold the accessories firmly in place on the accessory cross bar 15. The first accessory 18 is a frame for a front luggage compartment that may be used to hold a computer or similar item, and the second accessory 19 is a frame for a device that may be a holder for cups, cans, keys, a wallet, a mobile phone, etc. The shown accessories 18, 19 are only examples of accessories that may be attached to the accessory cross bar 15 and it should be understood that any other type of accessory may be attached to the accessory cross bar 15, as disclosed herein. Similarly, the clamping members 20 may be substituted with other types of fastening means such as screw-on fasteners, snap-on fasteners, etc. as known in the art.

[0035] Fig. 2 shows a portion of the carrier frame 2 in Fig. 1 in the area of the accessory cross bar 15. The accessory cross bar 15 is shown without any accessories mounted thereon revealing that it has a flattened shape with an upper part 21 and a lower part 22 and a rounded upper surface 23 at the upper part 21 of the accessory cross bar 15.

[0036] The carrier frame 2 in Figs. 1 and 2 has an adjustable push-handle 8. The push-handle is attached to the struts 11 with pivot joints 24 which allow the angle α between the push-handle 8 and the struts 11 to be adjusted. In Fig. 1 the push-handle 8 is shown in a generally upright position with the horizontally arranged central gripping portion 9 raised above the accessory cross bar 15. Fig. 2 shows the push-handle 8 in a position where it is almost level with the accessory cross bar 15.

[0037] Figure 3 shows a view similar to the view in Fig. 2 but with the accessories 18, 19 as shown in Fig. 1

mounted on the accessory cross bar by means of the clamping members 20 being clamped over the rounded upper surface 23 of the upper part 21 of the accessory cross bar 15.

[0038] Figs. 4 and 5 show an accessory cross bar 15 which may be used with the carrier frame 2 in Figs. 1-3. However, it is to be understood that the inner structure of the accessory cross bar 15 in Figs. 4 and 5 are optional features of the accessory cross bar 15 in Figs. 1-3. As in Figs. 1-3, the accessory cross bar 15 in Figs. 4 and 5 is shown to have a flattened shape in the vertical direction V, with an upper part 21 and a lower part 22 and a rounded upper surface 23 at the upper part 21 of the accessory cross bar 15. The accessory cross bar 15 has a front portion 25 and a rear portion 26 which are intended to be facing to the front and to the rear, respectively, when the accessory cross bar 15 is mounted in a passenger carrier. As is seen in Fig. 5, the front portion 25 and the rear portion 26 differ somewhat in shape so that the accessory cross bar 15 is asymmetrical in the horizontal direction H.

[0039] The accessory cross bar 15 in Figs. 4 and 5 is hollow with an internal cavity 30 divided into subcavities 30a, 30b, 30c and 30d by two inner vertical walls 31a, 31b and an inner horizontal wall 32. The inner vertical walls 31a, 31b and the inner horizontal wall 32 form a generally H-shaped inner profile inside the outer wall 33 of the accessory cross bar 15. The inner walls 31a, 31b and 32 constitute an inner reinforcing and stabilizing structure inside the accessory cross bar 15 and also have the function of delimiting the subcavities 30a-30d which may be used to receive and retain portions of fixtures and accessories as disclosed herein.

[0040] The accessory cross bar 15 has three elongated openings 34a, 34b and 35 extending in the longitudinal direction L of the accessory cross bar 15. The elongated openings 34a, 34b and 35 permit access from the outside to the inner subcavities 30a and 30b in the front and rear portions 25, 26 of the accessory cross bar 15 and to a central subcavity 30d in the lower part 22 of the accessory cross bar 15. The longitudinal openings 34a, 34b and 35 in the outer wall 33 of the accessory cross bar 15 appear as longitudinal tracks in the lower part 22 of the accessory cross bar 15.

[0041] Fig. 6 is a view of an end 36 of the accessory cross bar 15 in Figs. 4 and 5 which for the purpose of illustration is shown attached only with the non-visible opposite end in a fixture 17 on a bicycle trailer frame 2. The accessory cross bar 15 has an accessory 37 in the form of a fixture for an electronic device such as a speedometer or similar attached thereto by means of a clamping member 20 which is clamped over the upper part 21 of the accessory cross bar 15. The clamping member 20 has a shape which is adapted to the asymmetrical shape of the accessory cross bar 15 so that the clamping member will only fit on the accessory cross bar 15 in the way shown in Fig. 6. In this manner, it is ascertained that the accessory is correctly mounted on the accessory cross

bar 15. This may be particularly important for accessories such as infant seats, bassinets, and other heavy equipment.

[0042] Figs. 7 and 8 show the accessory cross bar 15 in Figs. 4-6 being used for securing a covering 40 for the passenger compartment of a passenger carrier frame (not shown in Fig. 7). The covering comprises a front covering sheet 40a and a rear covering sheet 40b. The covering sheets 40a, 40b each have an end portion 41a, 41b. A fold has been created at each end portion 41a, 41b of the covering sheets 40a, 40b and the folded-over parts of the covering sheets 40a, 40b have been sealed along their free end to form longitudinal channels 42a, 42b into which rods 43a, 43b have been inserted. The rods 43a, 43b having the covering sheets 40a, 40b secured thereto are shown to be inserted and retained in the front and rear inner subcavities 30a, 30b in the accessory cross bar 15. The rods 43a, 43b can be introduced into the subcavities 30a, 30b by sliding the rods 43a, 43b in at the open end of the accessory cross bar 15 with the front and rear covering sheets 40a, 40b extending out through the elongated openings 34a, 34b in the lower part 22 of the accessory cross bar 15. Once inserted into the subcavities 30a, 30b, the rods 43a, 43b act as stopping members prohibiting the ends of the covering sheets 40a, 40b from being pulled out of the elongated openings 30a, 30b in a direction perpendicular to the direction of extension of the elongated openings 30a, 30b. In order to act as stopping members for keeping the covering sheets 40a, 40b secured to the accessory cross bar 15, the diameter, d, of the rods 43a, 43b is greater than the width, w, of the elongated openings 34a, 34b.

[0043] The accessory cross bar 15 may be of the kind that is formed integral with the carrier frame by the manufacturer of the passenger carrier such that the covering is a permanent, non-removable part of the passenger carrier. Alternatively, the accessory cross bar 15 is a separate part allowing a user of the passenger carrier to attach and remove the covering as desired. The passenger carrier without the accessory cross bar 15 is not within the scope of the invention.

[0044] Commonly available passenger carriers have a passenger compartment with a size and shape defined by the passenger carrier frame. The passenger compartment usually has side walls, a front wall, a roof and a rear wall. The front wall and the roof are often formed as a continuous sloped wall, with no apparent demarcation between the roof part and the front wall part. The front covering sheet 40a may form a roof 44 and a front portion 45 and optionally also side walls 46 as seen in Fig. 9. The rear covering sheet 40b may form a rear wall 47. Fig. 8 shows the accessory cross bar 15 with part of a roof 44 formed by the front covering sheet 40a and part of a rear wall 47 formed by the rear covering sheet 40b.

[0045] The stopping members at the ends of the covering sheets 40a, 40b need not be rods inserted in an end fold as shown in the figures. Alternative ways of attaching stopping members such as gluing, welding, sta-

pling, etc. may be used. Moreover, the stopping members may be integrally formed with the covering sheet and may, for instance, be a thickened edge portion of the covering sheet. A thickened edge portion may be accomplished by rolling or folding the covering material to create a multi-layered thickened structure along the edge of the covering sheet. The thickened portion can be stabilized by mechanical or adhesive bonding or by ultrasonic or thermal welding.

[0046] Figs. 10 and 11 show a passenger carrier frame 2 with only rear wheels 3 and a different construction of the push-handle 8 as compared with the carrier frame 2 in Figs. 1-3. As these differences are inessential to the present invention, elements fulfilling the same function in the Figs. 1-3 embodiment and in the Figs. 10 and 11 embodiment have been designated the same reference numbers. The frame 2 shown in Fig. 10 has two connection points 50, 51 at the front of the carrier frame 2. The connection points 50, 51 are arranged at open ends of longitudinally extending passenger carrier frame elements 53, 54 and are adapted to receive connecting members arranged on a front wheel arrangement or a bicycle coupling arrangement.

[0047] The accessories 18, 19 that are shown to be attached to the accessory cross bar 15 are the same as those shown in Figs. 1-3 and they are attached in the same manner, with clamping members 20 clamped over the upper part 21 of the accessory cross bar 15.

[0048] A major difference between the accessory cross bar 15 shown in Figs. 10 and 11 and the accessory cross bar 15 shown in Figs. 1-3, is that the Figs. 10 and 11 accessory cross bar 15 is attached to the carrier frame 2 as a separate member in addition to the parts assembled by the manufacturer of the bicycle trailer.

[0049] As is shown in Fig. 11, the accessory cross bar 15 is attached to the passenger carrier frame 2 by means of attachment members 55 comprising a frame attachment part 56 and an accessory cross bar holder 57. The attachment members 55 allow the accessory cross bar 15 to be repeatedly attached to the bicycle trailer frame 2 and to be removed therefrom, without affecting the structure or function of the bicycle trailer frame 2.

[0050] The frame attachment part 56 of each attachment member 55 may be any type of attachment device suitable for the purpose, such as clamps, snap-on attachments, etc. The attachment member 55 shown in Figs. 10 and 11 is provided with a releasable locking arrangement 58 for securing the attachment member 55 in a desired position on the bicycle trailer frame 2.

Claims

1. A passenger carrier (1) comprising an accessory cross bar (15), said passenger carrier (1) comprising a passenger carrier frame (2) and a push-handle (8) at a front end or a rear end of said passenger carrier frame (2), said accessory cross bar (15) being

mounted horizontally on said passenger carrier frame (2) and having a non-circular cross-section, wherein said accessory cross bar has a non-circular cross-section along the full length of said accessory cross bar (15), said accessory cross bar (15) being hollow and comprising an outer wall (33) and an interior cavity (30) and an opening (34a, 34b, 35) extending in a longitudinal direction of the accessory cross bar (15) in said outer wall (33) to permit access from the outside to said interior cavity (30), said accessory cross bar having an upper part (21) and a lower part (22) in a vertical direction (V), said upper part (21) having a rounded surface (23), said accessory cross bar (15) being adapted for mounting of an accessory on an outside of said accessory cross bar (15).

2. A passenger carrier according to claim 1, wherein said accessory cross bar (15) comprises an inner vertical wall (31a, 31b) in said interior cavity (30).

3. A passenger carrier according to claim 2, wherein said accessory cross bar (15) comprises two inner vertical walls (31a, 31b) in said interior cavity (30).

4. A passenger carrier according to claim 3, wherein said accessory cross bar (15) comprises an inner horizontal wall (32) extending between said two inner vertical walls (31a, 31b) in said interior cavity (30).

5. A passenger carrier according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said interior cavity (30) in said accessory cross bar (15) is arranged to receive and retain an end portion of a cover sheet (40a, 40b) for covering of said passenger carrier frame (2).

6. A passenger carrier according to claim 5, wherein said accessory cross bar (15) comprises two interior cavities (30a, 30b) arranged to receive and retain an end portion of a cover sheet (40a, 40b) for covering of said passenger carrier frame (2).

7. A passenger carrier according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said accessory cross bar (15) comprises attachment members (55) for repeated attachment and removal of said accessory cross bar (15) from said passenger carrier frame (2).

8. A passenger carrier (1) according any one of claims 1-6, wherein said accessory cross bar (15) is an integral, pre-mounted part of said passenger carrier frame (2).

9. A passenger carrier according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said accessory cross bar (15) has an asymmetric shape in a horizontal direction (H).

10. A passenger carrier (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said passenger carrier (1) is a multi-function bicycle trailer and stroller.

Patentansprüche

1. Passagierträger (1), der einen Zubehör-Querträger (15) umfasst, wobei der Passagierträger (1) einen Passagierträgerahmen (2) und einen Schiebehandgriff (8) an einem vorderen Ende oder einem hinteren Ende des Passagierträgerahmens (2) aufweist, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger (15) horizontal an dem Passagierträgerahmen (2) montiert ist und einen nicht-kreisförmigen Querschnitt aufweist, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger einen nicht kreisförmigen Querschnitt entlang der gesamten Länge des Zubehör-Querträgers (15) hat, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger (15) hohl ist und eine Außenwand (33) und einen inneren Hohlraum (30) umfasst, sowie eine Öffnung (34a, 34b, 35), die in einer Längsrichtung des Zubehör-Querträgers (15) in der Außenwand (33) verläuft, um eine Zugänglichkeit von außen zum inneren Hohlraum (30) zu ermöglichen, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger einen oberen Teil (21) und einen unteren Teil (22) in einer vertikalen Richtung (V) aufweist, wobei der obere Teil (21) eine abgerundete Oberfläche (23) hat, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger (15) zum Montieren eines Zubehörs am Äußeren des Zubehör-Querträgers (15) angepasst ist.
2. Passagierträger nach Anspruch 1, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger (15) eine innere vertikale Wand (31a, 31b) in dem inneren Hohlraum (30) umfasst.
3. Passagierträger nach Anspruch 2, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger (15) zwei innere vertikale Wände (31a, 31b) in dem inneren Hohlraum (30) umfasst.
4. Passagierträger nach Anspruch 3, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger (15) eine innere horizontale Wand (32) umfasst, die zwischen den zwei inneren vertikalen Wänden (31a, 31b) in dem inneren Hohlraum (30) verläuft.
5. Passagierträger nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei der innere Hohlraum (30) im Zubehör-Querträger (15) so angeordnet ist, dass er einen Endbereich eines Abdeck-Flächenkörpers (40a, 40b) zum Abdecken des Passagierträgerahmens (2) aufnimmt und hält.
6. Passagierträger nach Anspruch 5, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger (15) zwei innere Hohlräume (30a, 30b) aufweist, die so angeordnet sind, dass sie einen Endbereich eines Abdeck-Flächenkörpers (40a, 40b) zum Abdecken des Passagierträgerahmens (2) aufnehmen und halten.

7. Passagierträger nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger (15) Befestigungselemente (55) zum wiederholten Anbringen und Entfernen des Zubehör-Querträgers (15) vom Passagierträgerahmen (2) umfasst.

8. Passagierträger (1) nach einem der Ansprüche 1-6, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger (15) ein integraler vormontierter Teil des Passagierträgerahmens (2) ist.
9. Passagierträger nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei der Zubehör-Querträger (15) eine asymmetrische Form in einer horizontalen Richtung (H) hat.
10. Passagierträger (1) nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei der Passagierträger (1) ein Multifunktions-Fahrradanhängers und -Kinderwagen ist.

Revendications

1. Support de passager (1) comprenant une barre transversale d'accessoire (15), ledit support de passager (1) comprenant un cadre de support de passager (2) et une poignée de poussée (8) à une extrémité avant ou une extrémité arrière dudit cadre de support de passager (2), ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) étant montée horizontalement sur ledit cadre de support de passager (2) et ayant une section transversale non circulaire, dans lequel ladite barre transversale d'accessoire a une section transversale non circulaire sur toute la longueur de ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15), ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) étant creuse et comprenant une paroi extérieure (33) et une cavité intérieure (30) et une ouverture (34a, 34b, 35) s'étendant dans une direction longitudinale de la barre transversale d'accessoire (15) dans ladite paroi extérieure (33) pour permettre un accès depuis l'extérieur à ladite cavité intérieure (30), ladite barre transversale d'accessoire ayant une partie supérieure (21) et une partie inférieure (22) dans une direction verticale (V), ladite partie supérieure (21) ayant une surface arrondie (23), ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) étant adaptée pour le montage d'un accessoire sur un extérieur de ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15).
2. Support de passager selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) comprend une paroi verticale intérieure (31a, 31b) dans ladite cavité intérieure (30).
3. Support de passager selon la revendication 2, dans lequel ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15)

comprend deux parois verticales intérieures (31a, 31b) dans ladite cavité intérieure (30).

4. Support de passager selon la revendication 3, dans lequel ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) comprend une paroi horizontale intérieure (32) s'étendant entre lesdites deux parois verticales intérieures (31a, 31b) dans ladite cavité intérieure (30). 5
5. Support de passager selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel ladite cavité intérieure (30) dans ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) est agencée pour recevoir et retenir une portion d'extrémité d'une housse de protection (40a, 40b) pour la protection dudit cadre de support de passage (2). 10 15
6. Support de passager selon la revendication 5, dans lequel ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) comprend deux cavités intérieures (30a, 30b) agencées pour recevoir et retenir une portion d'extrémité d'une housse de protection (40a, 40b) pour la protection dudit cadre de support de passage (2). 20
7. Support de passager selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) comprend des éléments de fixation (55) pour une fixation et un retrait répétés de ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) dudit cadre de support de passager (2). 25 30
8. Support de passager (1) selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 6, dans lequel ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) est une partie pré-montée intégrale dudit cadre de support de passager (2). 35
9. Support de passager selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel ladite barre transversale d'accessoire (15) a une forme asymétrique dans une direction horizontale (H). 40
10. Support de passager (1) selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel ledit support de passager (1) est une poussette et remorque pour vélo multifonction. 45

50

55

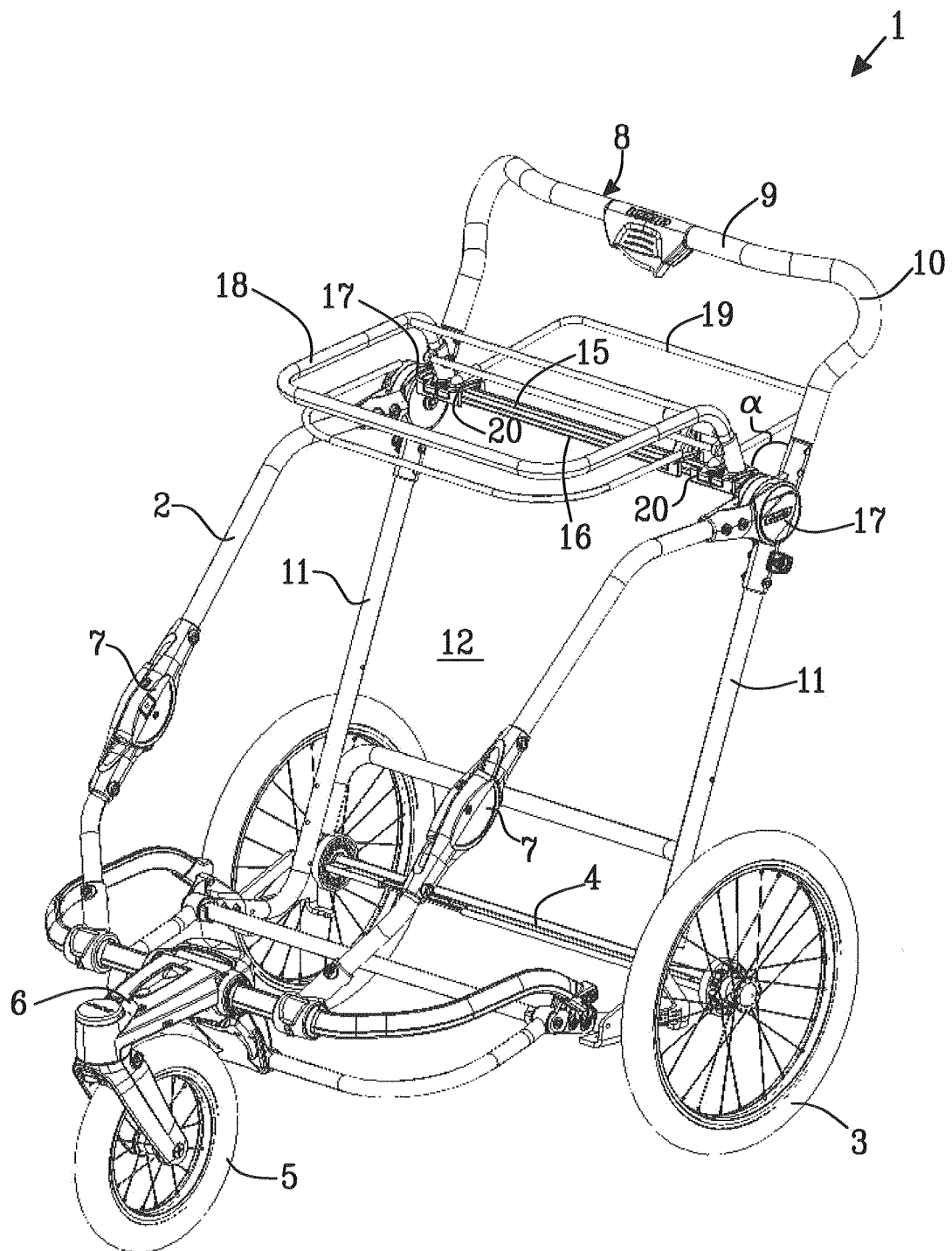


Fig. 1

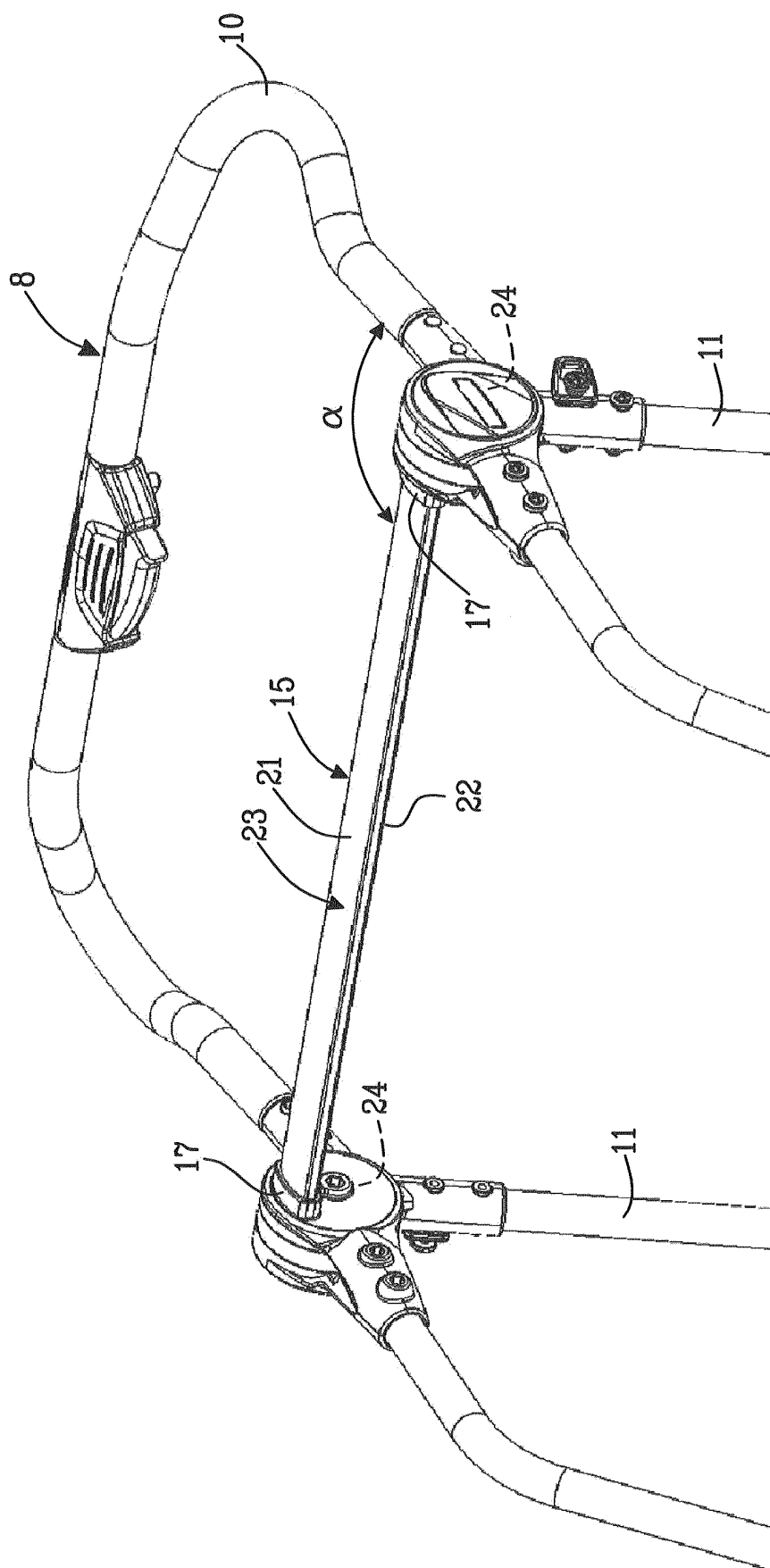


Fig. 2

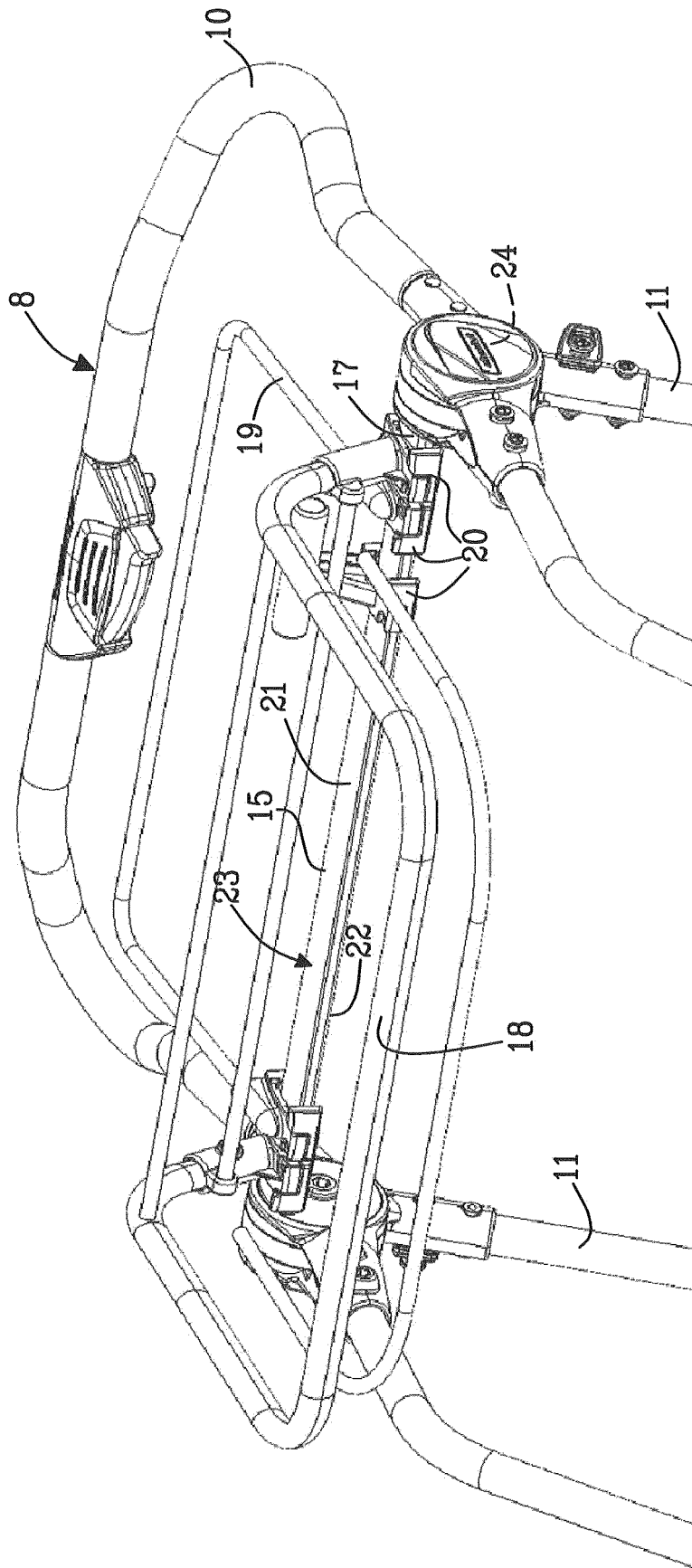


Fig.3

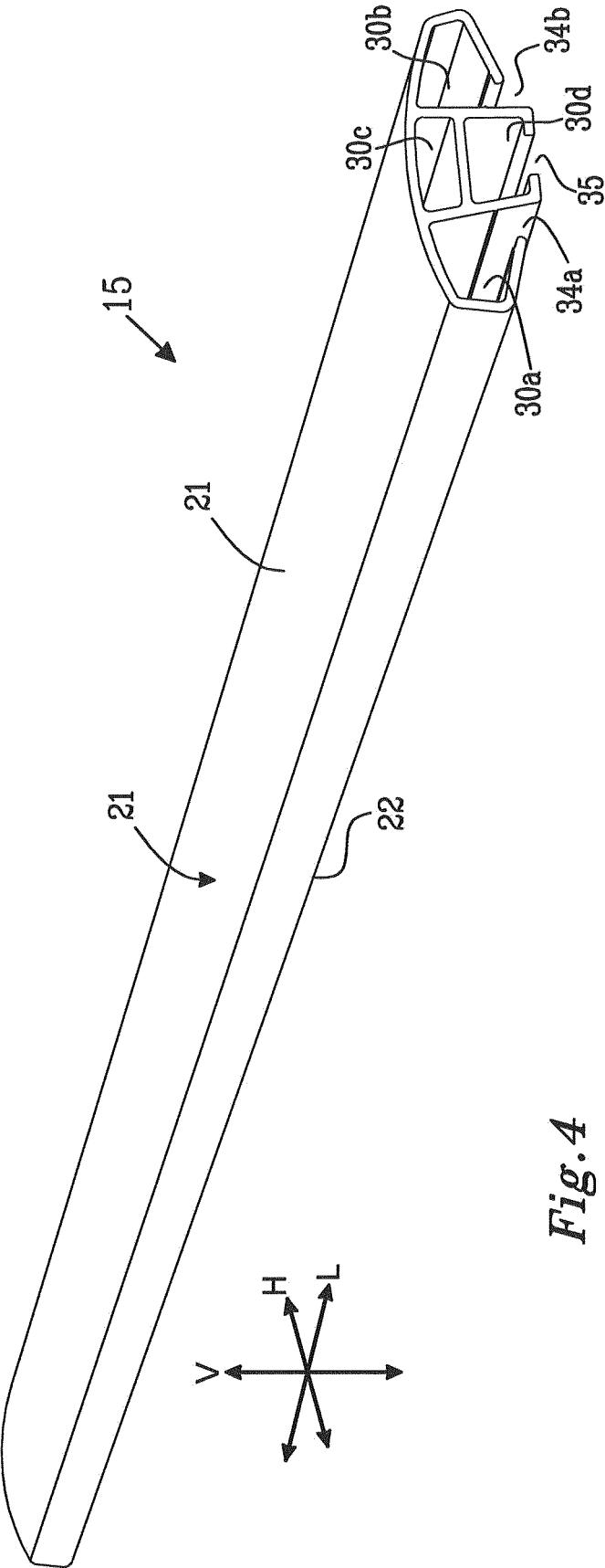


Fig. 4

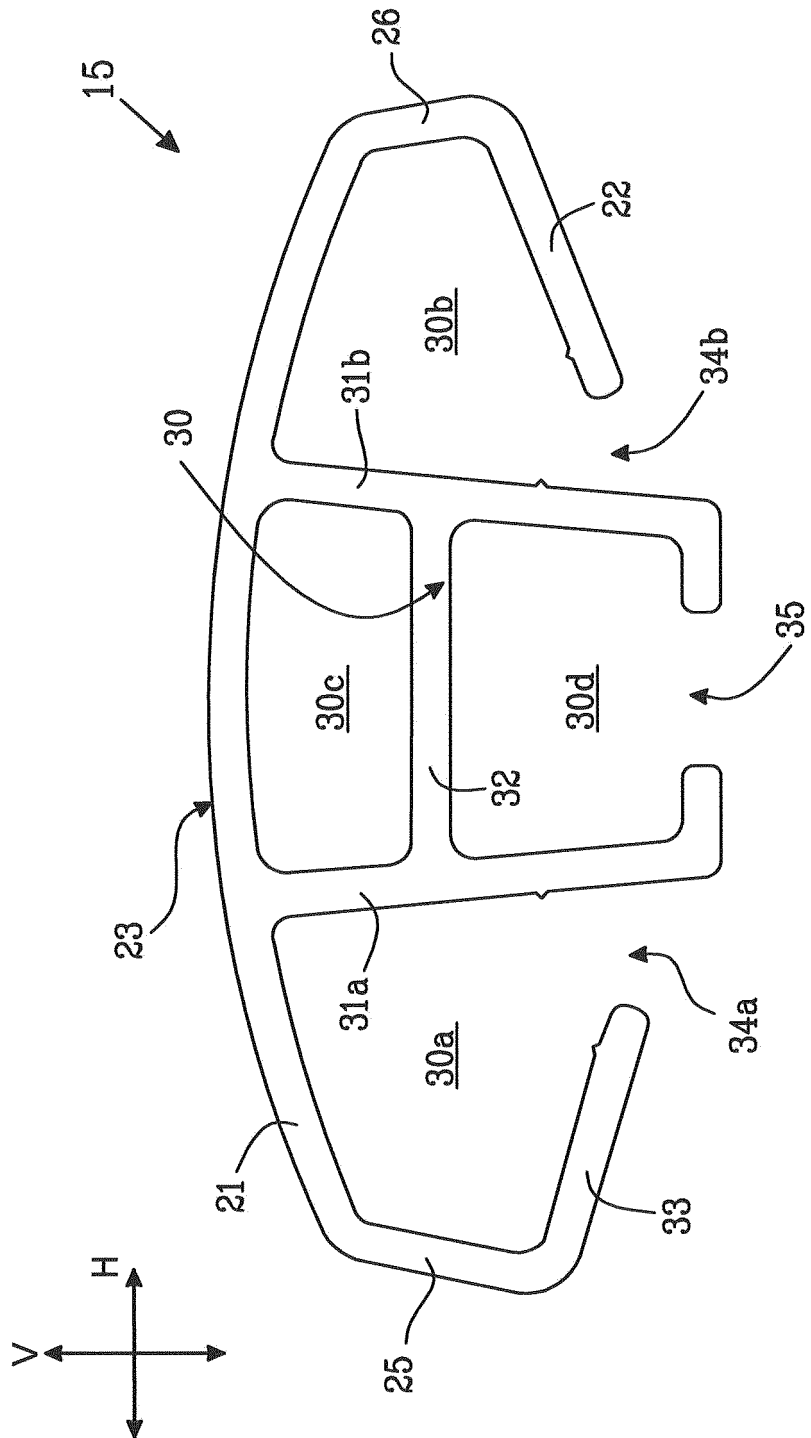


Fig. 5

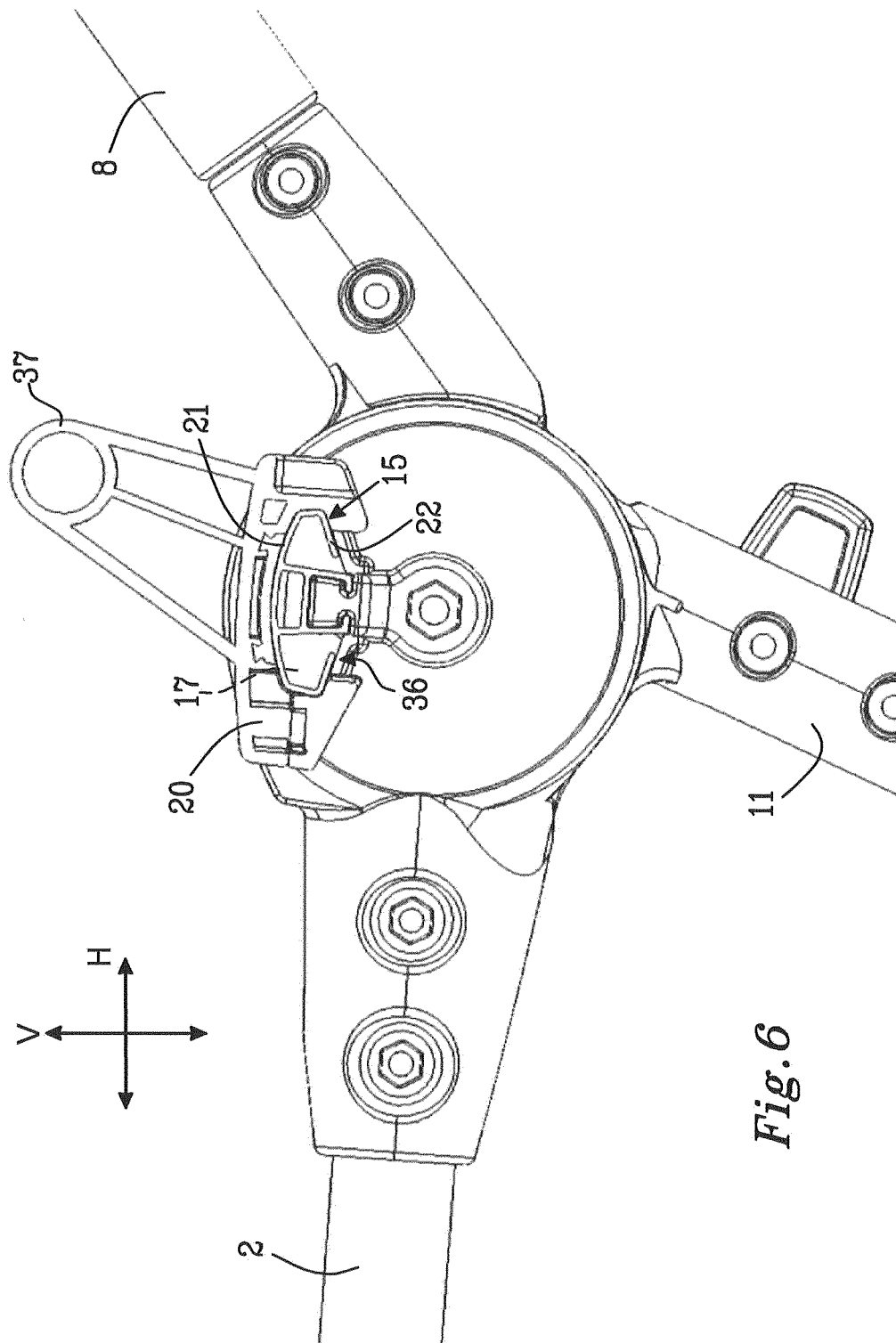


Fig. 6

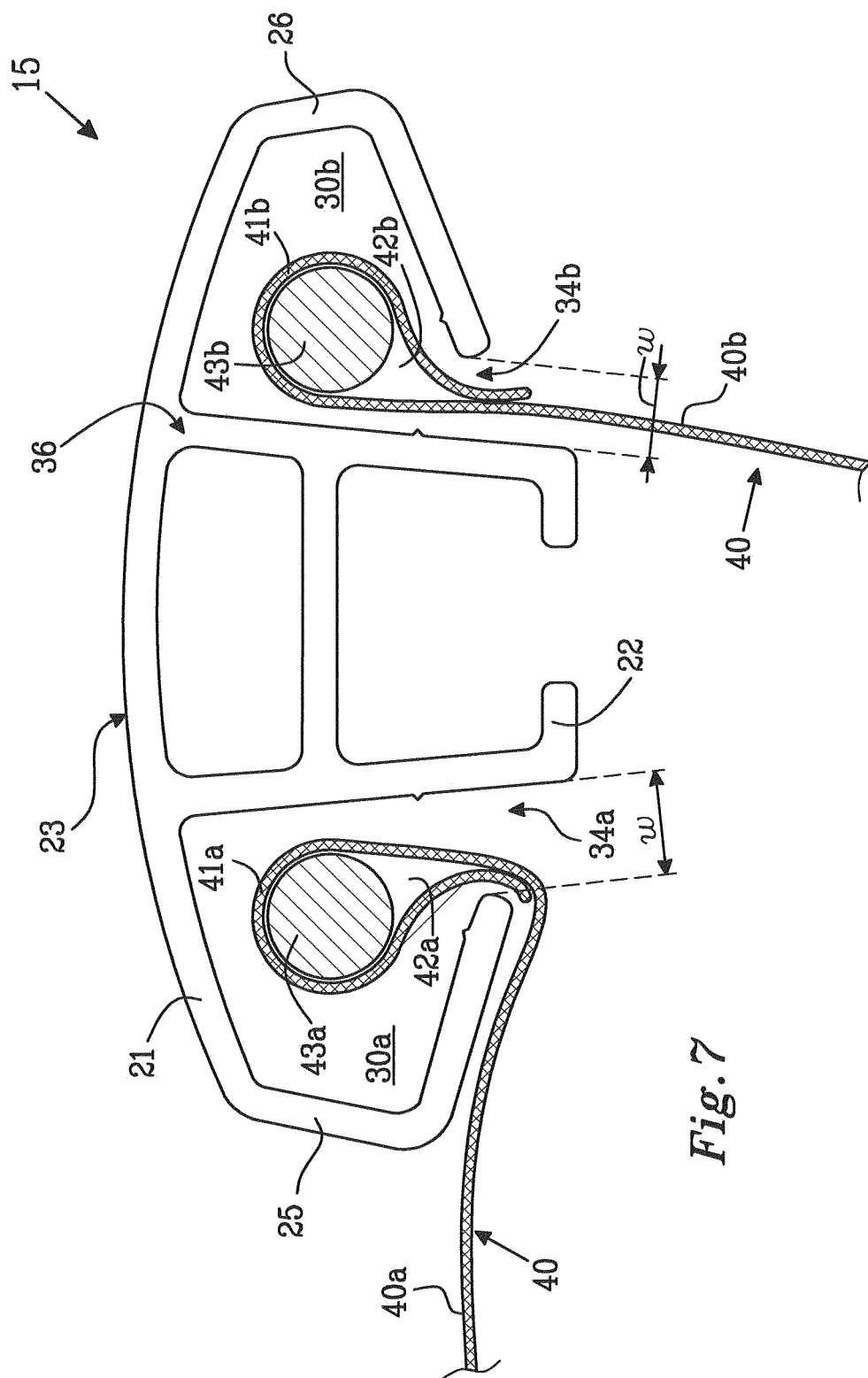


Fig. 7

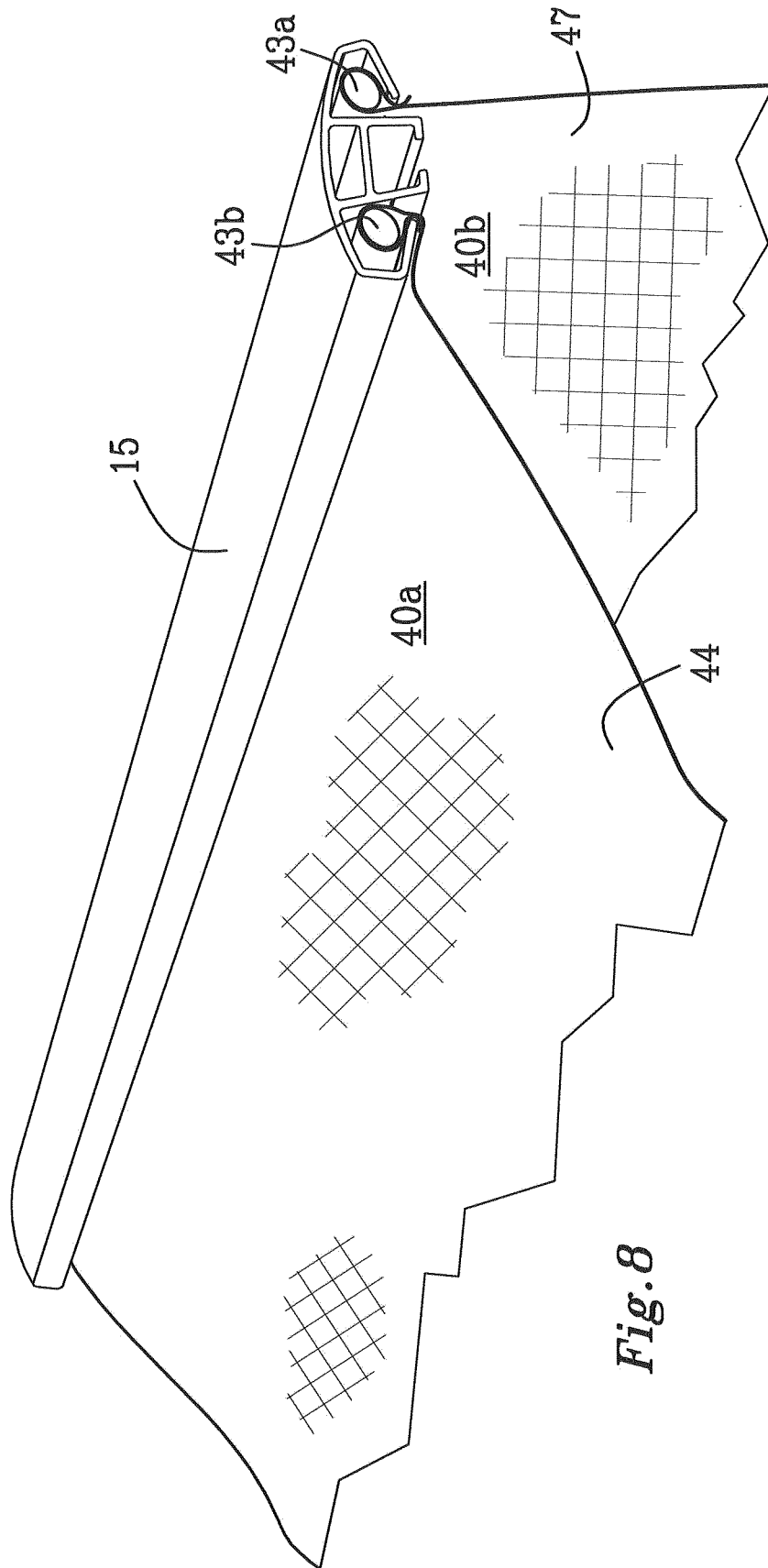
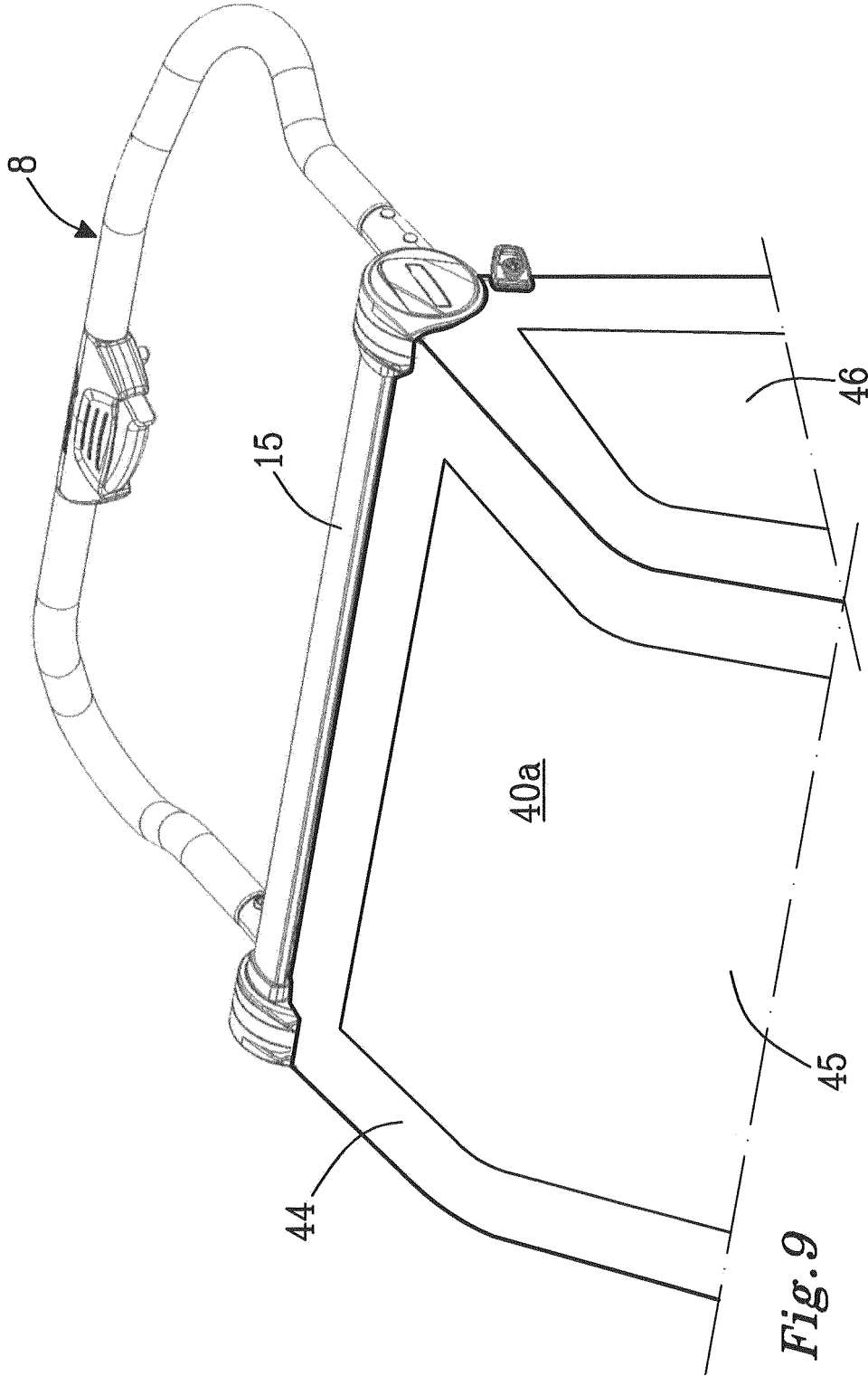


Fig. 8



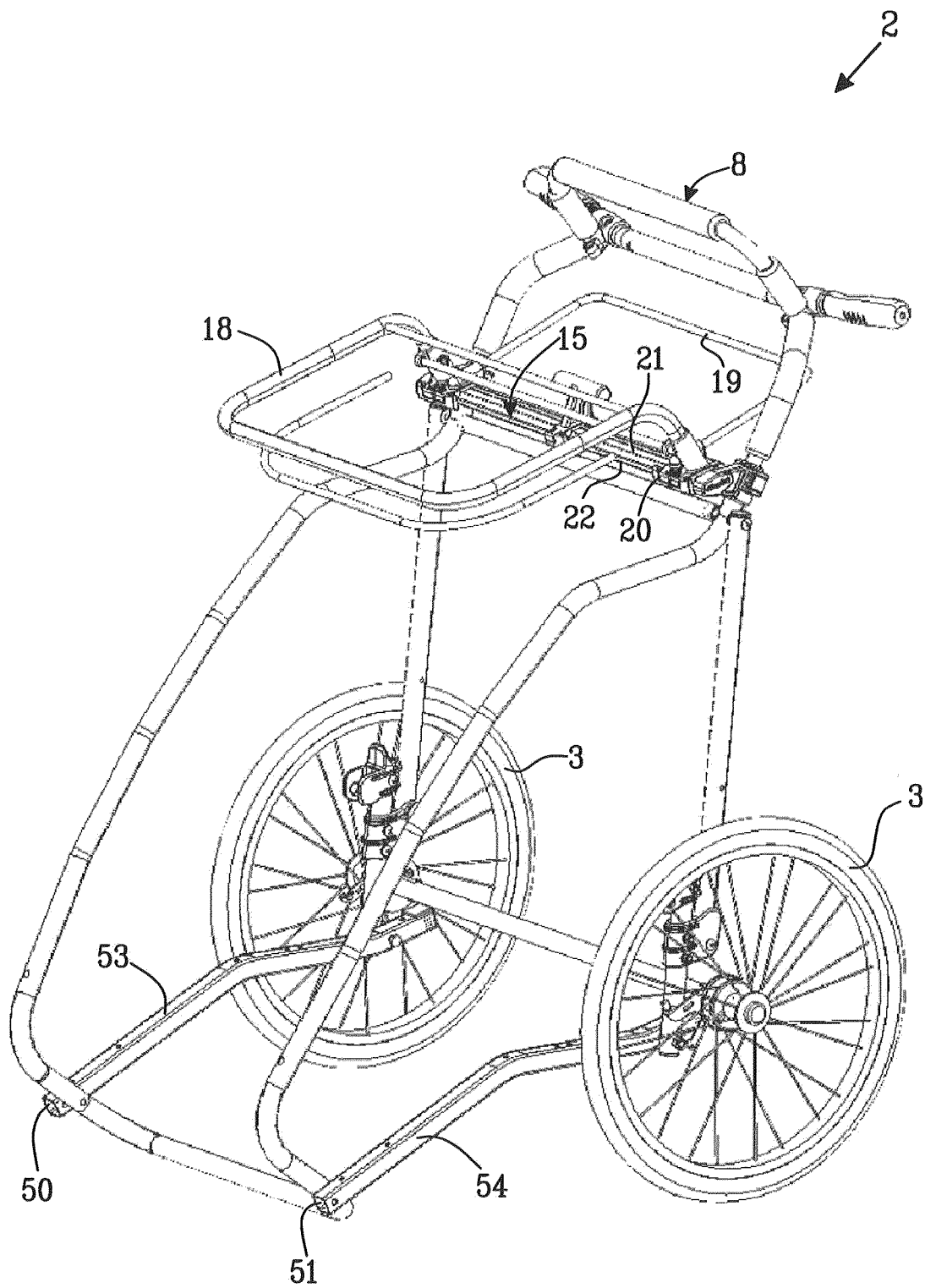


Fig.10

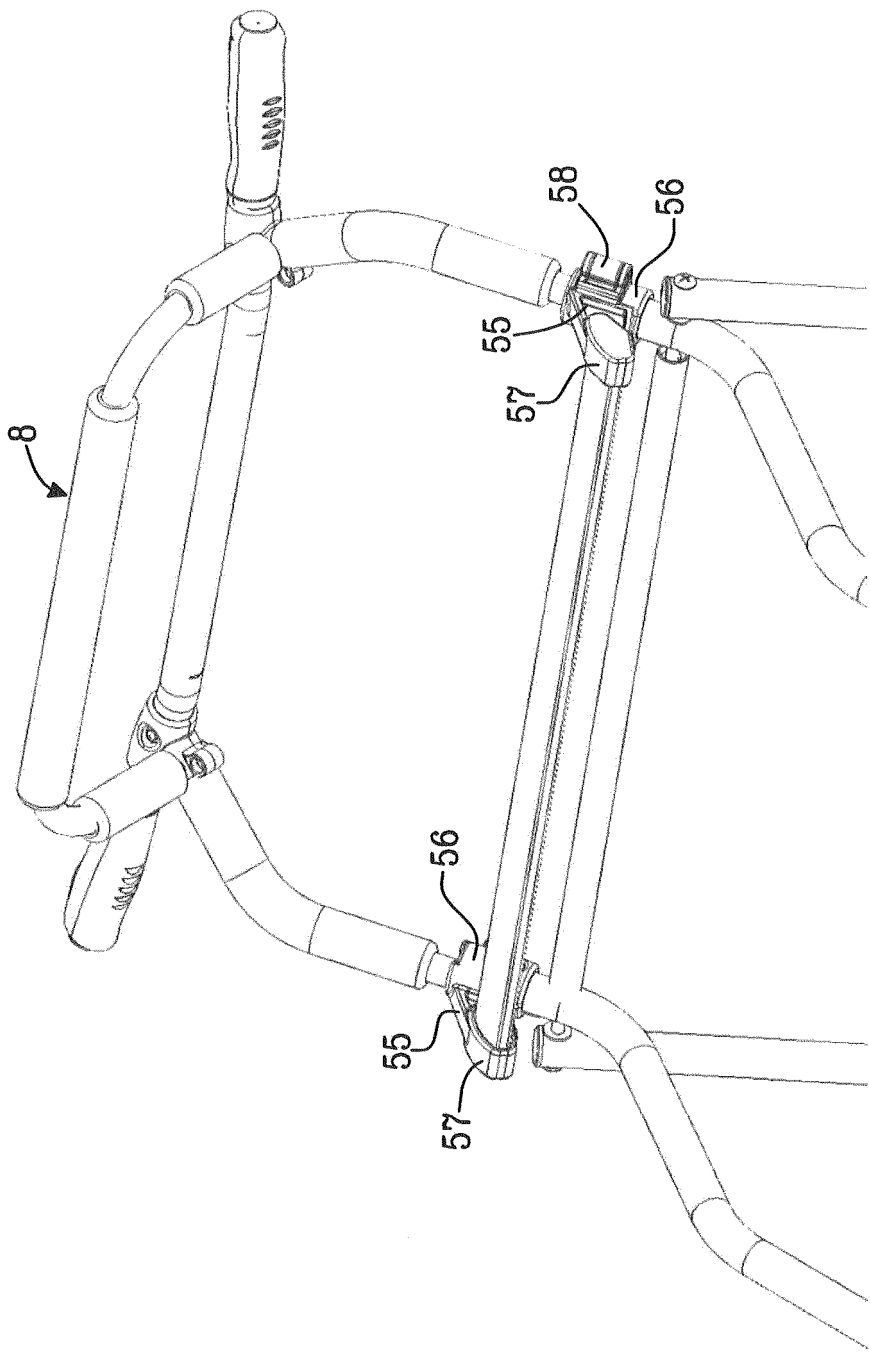


Fig. 11

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

This list of references cited by the applicant is for the reader's convenience only. It does not form part of the European patent document. Even though great care has been taken in compiling the references, errors or omissions cannot be excluded and the EPO disclaims all liability in this regard.

Patent documents cited in the description

- US 5344171 A [0002]
- US D633825 S [0002]
- US 20080143076 A1 [0002]
- US 20100244405 A1 [0002]
- US 6368006 B [0004]
- EP 0913312 A2 [0004]
- EP 2017158 A2 [0005]